United Nations S/2017/13

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 January 2017
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 5 January 2017 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I wish to transmit the following information:

The armed terrorist groups that some refer to as "moderate" proved unwilling to bid farewell to the old year without carrying out one more horrific crime. On 24 December 2016, the terrorist Nusrah Front and its criminal gangs positioned in the Wadi Barada and Fijah areas of Rif Dimashq blew up the principal water main connecting the Fijah spring to Damascus. Not content with that action, the terrorists polluted the water and the pipe using fuel oil and other hazardous substances. The pipe was thus put out of use, and the city of Damascus was deprived of 80 per cent of its water, particularly its drinking water. The situation has caused considerable damage and suffering which, if they continue, could cause a humanitarian disaster for the over 7 million inhabitants of Damascus, particularly women, children and other vulnerable groups. Food, health and hygiene standards would deteriorate markedly.

Mindful of its patriotic duty, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has mobilized its full capacities to use reserve wells, distribute water to civilians and find alternative ways to provide the basic needs of the inhabitants of Damascus. It is also monitoring the water's quality and suitability for drinking and human use.

The Nusrah Front, Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and associated groups have been carrying out criminal acts with support from certain Western Members of the Security Council, particularly France, Britain and the United States of America, and their regional proxies such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar and Turkey. Those acts underscore the true criminal nature of the groups, which the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic has fought relentlessly. The Syrian Government emphasizes that cutting off civilians' access to water amounts to a war crime and a crime against humanity. Such actions are part of a series of crimes and violations of internal law committed by armed terrorist groups in the major Syrian cities, particularly Damascus and Aleppo. The latter was denied water when the eastern neighbourhoods were under terrorist control. That measure was suggested by the regimes and governments that support and direct the

Please recycle

terrorist organizations, to which they refer using such terms as "moderate armed opposition". Such names show contempt and disdain for global public opinion. They are misplaced, insulting and inconsistent with the provisions of international law.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic regrets the silence of the international community and the reticence and hypocrisy of those States that claim to show concern for the rights of Syrian civilians and feel pity at their plight. Certain international governmental and non-governmental organizations have also failed to condemn this heinous crime, which has taken place before their very eyes, with the knowledge and at the behest of certain sponsors of terrorism. The Syrian Government also stresses that unjustified endeavours from within and beyond the United Nations to secure resolutions in support of terrorists and their organizations do nothing to resolve the Syrian crisis, and can only make it worse. Syria hopes that those organizations and governments will come to their senses in the new year by holding to account the parties that are supporting and encouraging the terrorist organizations and, in so doing, have thus helped to kill innocent civilians, destroyed infrastructure in Syria and, far from suppressing or eradicating terrorism, have promoted it and invested in it.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic once again calls on the Security Council and the Member States of the United Nations to condemn these terrorist crimes, which brazenly target civilians; take the necessary action to support the Syrian Government in its endeavour to restore water services to Damascus city; and do everything it takes to prevent and punish the regimes and States that support and fund terrorism in Syria, and those entities that have cut off water supply as a collective punishment against millions of Syrian civilians, first in Aleppo, Dar'a and other cities and now in Damascus. Syria insists that the Security Council resolutions on combating terrorism and terrorist financing, particularly resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014), 2199 (2015) and 2253 (2015), must be enforced.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Mounzer **Mounzer**
Minister Counsellor
Chargé d'affaires a.i.